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Viewing cable 06AMMAN5486, TFLE01: GOJ BACKS U.S. EFFORTS WHILE SEEKING TO

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- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
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| Reference ID | Created | Released | Classification | Origin |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 06AMMAN5486 | 2006-07-20 14:41 | 2011-08-30 01:44 | CONFIDENTIAL | Embassy Amman |

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/20/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [LE](#) [IS](#) [RU](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: TFLE01: GOJ BACKS U.S. EFFORTS WHILE SEEKING TO DEFUSE RISING PUBLIC ANGER

REF: AMMAN 5396

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The GOJ wants to work with the U.S. toward a long-term improvement in southern Lebanon, but is under strong public pressure, from all sectors of society, to call publicly for an immediate ceasefire. End summary.

Attacks in Arab Media Sting

¶2. (SBU) Newspaper headlines on July 20 focus on U.S. and British & opposition8 to a ceasefire. Al-Jazeera and other Arabic channels have given prominent play in recent days to attacks on the two Kings Abdullah and on President Mubarak for their public criticism of Hizballah.

¶3. (C) Jordanian leaders are especially frosted by a campaign of personal attacks directed at the King and FM Khatib. In a prime-time Al-Jazeera broadcast on July 18, the King was described as a traitor to Arabs and a lackey of the U.S. and Israel. A Lebanese newspaper, al-Safir, described Khatib as having acted as the & Israeli Foreign Minister8 during the Cairo extraordinary meeting. He told Ambassador he believed the Syrian government planted this item.

GOJ Supportive of U.S. Efforts, But Feeling the Heat

¶4. (C) Jordanian officials, feeling the pressure of public opinion, have stepped up public calls for a ceasefire while privately sharing our view that time is needed to create an environment conducive to a durable, peaceful outcome. Jordan's official news agency, covering Khatib's meeting July 19 with visiting Russian Deputy FM Sultanov, quoted Khatib as:

--affirming Jordan's support for full Lebanese government control over all Lebanese territory

--calling for international support for Palestinian President Abbas

--stressing the importance of a Palestinian-Israeli solution that provides for a Palestinian state and for Israel's security needs.

(Khatib told Ambassador that Sultanov had no ideas or proposals for bringing the Lebanon or Gaza situations under control.)

¶5. (C) The Palace media shop announced that the King and Secretary Rice spoke on July 19, and that the King stressed

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the &necessity to intensify international efforts in this phase to work to realize an immediate ceasefire and end the Israeli military escalation.8 He underscored the importance of the U.S. role in achieving this aim.

¶6. (C) In private, the GOJ seeks continued coordination with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S., but both Foreign Minister Khatib and the director of the King's office, Bassem Awadallah, have registered with us the importance of focusing public diplomacy on support for a ceasefire and tangible help for the Lebanese people. FM Khatib told Ambassador July 20 the GOJ is working behind the scenes to block efforts to convene an Arab Summit.

Public Mood

¶7. (C) Meanwhile, Jordanians across a broad spectrum) from the scotch-sipping elite, to trade unionists, to the Islamists) complain to us, some emotionally, of U.S. passivity. Faris Breizat of the Center for Strategic and International Studies told emboff that the polling numbers he expects to obtain next week will give Hizballah positives in the 90 percent range. There is a feeling that under the present circumstances, festive events are inappropriate; for

example the annual Jerash Cultural Festival has been cancelled for the first time since the 1982 conflict in Lebanon. The Egyptian Embassy cancelled its national day reception.

The Scotch-and-Soda Set

¶8. (C) At an Embassy reception July 19, one businessman told the Ambassador Israeli operations in Lebanon constituted &genocide8 and accused the U.S. of supporting this genocide by standing aside (this comment may have stemmed from generous helpings at the open bar.) An FSN from one of

Amman,s leading families said upper-crust Jordanians trying out a newly-opened spa at the Dead Sea talked mostly in abusive terms of President Bush. A staffer from Queen Rania,s office complained to emboff July 18 that the U.S. was like a gang member who &helps hold the victim down8 during a gang rape.

¶9. (C) Musa Keilani, a columnist with family ties both to the security establishment and to the old guard among the Muslim Brotherhood, lamented that he and others &who used to speak out in support of co-existence8 with Israel must now keep their mouths shut, for fear their friends and families will brand them &traitors.8 The popularity of King Abdullah and his government was bleeding away because of the conflict, Keilani said.

Labor Leaders

¶10. (C) Mazen Maytah, the president of Jordan,s labor union federation, told polcouns July 19 that he personally agreed with the King that Hizballah had harmed Arab interests by starting &this adventure,8 however, his membership strongly backs Hizballah. Fathallah Omrani, president of the textile workers, union, who collaborates closely with Embassy on migrant laborer issues, told polcouns that his members view Israel as the aggressor, admire Hizballah for offering &resistance when no Arab governments will,8 and are angry about the Jordanian King,s statement July 17 condemning Hizballah.

Islamists to Stage More Demonstrations

¶11. (C) The GOJ granted a permit to the Muslim Brotherhood,s political arm, the Islamic Action Front, to stage a demonstration Friday, July 21, which we expect will be larger than the non-IAF rally on the same site last Friday (reftel.) Other, spontaneous post-prayer rallies are also likely. Intelligence officials are confident they will remain orderly and controlled. The Emergency Action Committee met July 20 (septel) to review the situation and agreed to reiterate standing guidance on avoiding public places after Friday prayers.

Hale